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ABSTRACT

This paper reflects on an attempt to create and study a professional context for teacher education based on collegiality and mutuality and raises some issues and questions about trends in teacher education reform. The paper begins with a brief review of the rise of alternative approaches in teacher education. Included are examples from educators' experiences with conceptual change approaches to illustrate inconsistencies and problems associated with this type of teaching. The paper suggests that the underpinnings of teacher preparation--attitudes, conceptions, beliefs, values, assumptions, and habits--have not changed much; that they are still rooted in behaviorism and that this is subtly undermining efforts to create conceptual change. The paper proposes that a lack of cultural and conceptual change in teacher education is a possible reason why change has not occurred. The paper next describes a year-long literacy project which dealt directly with the inconsistencies experienced. The paper uses a framework for thinking about cultural and conceptual change in teacher education to describe what the project tried to do differently. Included in the description is a discussion of adjustments and difficulties faced. The paper concludes with issues and questions surrounding cultural and conceptual change at the teacher education level. A table listing the adjustments and difficulties and a figure illustrating the framework are included; 62 references, an illustration of a vision for the literate person, and two appendixes discussing data collection procedures are attached. (Author/RS)

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Building Professional Contexts for Learning for Preservice and Inservice Teachers and Teacher Educators: Reflections, Issues and Questions

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RUNNING HEAD: Building Professional Contexts for Learning

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to (a) reflect on our efforts during the 1992-1993 academic school year to create and study a different type of professional context for learning for preservice and inservice teachers and teacher educators -- one based on collegiality and mutuality, and (b) raise for discussion some issues and questions about current trends in teacher education reform. We begin with a brief review of the rise of alternative approaches in teacher education. We include in our discussion examples from our own experiences with conceptual change approaches to illustrate inconsistencies and problems associated with this type of teaching.

We suggest that the underpinnings of teacher preparation -- attitudes, conceptions, beliefs, values, assumptions, and habits -- haven't changed much; that they are still rooted in behaviorism and that this is subtly undermining efforts to create conceptual change. We propose that a lack of cultural and conceptual change in teacher education is a possible reason why change hasn't occurred. After this we describe a year-long literacy project in which we openly and directly dealt with the inconsistencies we had experienced. We use a framework for thinking about cultural and conceptual change in teacher education to describe what we tried to do differently. Included in our description is a discussion of adjustments and difficulties we faced and how we grew from our experience. We conclude with issues and questions surrounding cultural and conceptual change at the teacher education level.

Building Professional Contexts for Learning for

Preservice and Inservice Teachers and Teacher Educators:

Reflections, Issues and Questions

Educators' views of teaching and learning are changing. More than a decade of cognitive research challenging behavioristic perspectives of learning (Case & Bereiter, 1984; Cohen & Ball, 1990; Putnam, Lampert, & Peterson, 1990; Resnick, 1983; Shuell, 1986) has prompted a shift in thinking toward constructivism. Increasingly, learning is being viewed not in terms of passive assimilation of information, but as a complex and personal process through which human beings actively build knowledge from actions, experiences and interactions with the world (Sigel & Cockling, 1977). In response to this shift toward constructivism, traditional mechanical drill-and-practice instructional approaches are slowly being replaced by inquiry-oriented instruction designed to promote students' conceptual knowledge by building on prior experience, active engagement with subject matter content, and application to real world situations.

Behaviorism is also beginning to give way to constructivism at the teacher education level. Teacher preparation programs are beginning to shift from a traditional deductive view of knowledge construction and a conception of teaching as a rational set of predictable behaviors toward a more complex view of knowledge construction and teaching. Conceptual change approaches through which teachers are encouraged to examine and challenge their own conceptions and beliefs are emerging as strong components in today's teacher education programs.

We are a group of preservice teachers (Kristy and Julie), inservice teachers (Wendy, and

Leah), and a literacy teacher educator/researcher (Beth Ann) operating within this transition period. For one academic school year (August, 1992 - May, 1993) we worked together (with several other preservice and inservice teachers) to challenge our conceptions and beliefs about literacy teaching and learning as well as our practice and self-perceptions as teaching professionals (Herrmann et al., 1993). Our purpose in writing this article is to reflect on our efforts to create and study a different type of professional context for learning and to raise for discussion some issues and questions about current trends in teacher education reform.

The Rise of Alternative Approaches to Teacher Preparation

For nearly two decades teacher preparation has been dominated by a behavioristic paradigm whereby teacher education has been viewed as a competency and performance-based enterprise (Feiman-Nemser, 1990). At the preservice level the goal has been to produce teachers who can perform certain behaviors associated with effective teaching (Brophy & Good, 1986); at the inservice level the goal has been to "fix" defective products (Michelsen, 1991). By tradition, teacher educators have played the role of the expert, espousing knowledge and expertise and supervising teacher development, primarily through didactic approaches (e.g., lectures) whereby knowledge and information are dispensed. For the most part, preservice and inservice teachers have played the role of passive learners, absorbing knowledge and adopting and complying with the experts' thinking.

A large body of research conducted over the past two decades has demonstrated that traditional approaches to teacher preparation have had little impact on teachers' prior conceptions and beliefs (Bird, Anderson, Sullivan & Swindler, 1993; Gomez & Stoddart, 1991;

Hollingsworth, 1989; Holt-Reynolds, 1992; Knowles & Holt-Reynolds, 1991; McDiarmid, 1989; Zeichner & Tabachnick, 1985; Zeichner, Tabachnick & Densmore, 1988) which powerfully influence their practice (Buchman, 1988, 1989; Bullough, 1989; Hollingsworth, 1986; 1989; Lortie, 1975; Stoddart, 1991; Zeichner, Tabachnick & Densmore, 1988). Both in response to these studies and to a national call for teacher education reform (Holmes Group, 1990; 1991), a number of teacher education programs are re-evaluating behaviorist traditions in light of a constructivist paradigm which suggests that learners are active meaning makers (Cobb, 1989) and that conceptual change is influenced by personal, motivational, social and historical processes. Teacher preparation is beginning to be viewed as a process of conceptual change with more emphasis being placed on approaches designed to challenge teachers' prior conceptions and beliefs (Posner, Strike, Hewson & Gertzog, 1982). For instance, it is not uncommon today to hear teacher educators talking about teacher preparation in terms of "reflection" (Bitting & Clift, 1988; Grimmett et al., 1988; Killion & Todman, 1991), "joint construction of knowledge" (Holmes Group, 1990, 1991), "dialectical discourse" (Roby, 1988), "narrative discourse" (Nespor & Barylske, 1991), "professional communication" (Anders, 1991), "collaboration" (Newmann, 1991), "learning community" (Carter, 1991), "professional partnerships" (Herrmann et al., 1993; Smyle & Hare, 1991; Taylor, 1991), "collegiality" (Vaughan, 1998), "empowerment" (Bartlett, 1990; Duffy, 1990; Roehler, Rushcamp & Lamberts, 1990), and "teacher-scholarship" (Duffy, 1990).

Within this new conceptual framework, teacher educators are challenged to become a vital part of and contribute to the formation or invention of sustained educational communities of

learners based upon thinking and learning, collaboration and empowerment. As Michelsen explains, this requires knowledge and understanding of the growth/change cycle as well as the ability to (a) promote self-reflection and reflective discourse, (b) facilitate the exploration of new knowledge and understandings, (c) provide new lenses through which teachers can study their own practice (Goodson, 1991; Lester, 1990), (d) build trusting relationships (Taylor, 1991), (e) acknowledge and facilitate professional risk-taking, and (f) balance support and challenge. Likewise, preservice and inservice teachers are challenged to change their conceptions and beliefs through self-reflection about their own practice, understanding and transforming research findings and theories, and reflective discourse with colleagues about problems and reflections (Mayer & Brause, 1991).

The shift toward constructivism and the rise of alternative approaches at the teacher education level is encouraging, but how well are conceptual change approaches working? Some evidence suggests that they are highly problematic (Bird, Anderson, Sullivan & Swidler, 1993; Herrmann & Sarracino, 1993). For example, Bird, Anderson, Sullivan & Swidler (1993) had this to say about their efforts to challenge prospective teachers' beliefs in a preservice introductory teacher education course,

> There seems to be a constant tension between establishing oneself as a knowledgeable and helpful teacher and encouraging the students to think for themselves and take risks; between cultivating familiar ideas and promoting unfamiliar ones; between helping students think and take over the direction of their thinking; between keeping the students comfortable with and responsive to

> novel demands while prompting them to test their thinking and reconsider their ideas (p. 265).

Herrmann & Sarracino (1993) describe similar problems with their efforts to incorporate conceptual change approaches into a restructured preservice literacy methods course. Their work also suggests that conceptually-based approaches may not be working as well as expected in changing teachers' prior conceptions and beliefs (Herrmann & Sarracino, 1991;1993, Sarracino, 1993).

We have first-hand experience with these kinds of problems having been on the receiving end of conceptual change approaches as preservice and inservice teachers, and on the front end of developing and implementing them as a literacy teacher educator. In the following section we use examples from our own experiences to illustrate some of these problems and to explore two possible reasons why contemporary approaches to teacher preparation are problematic.

Problems with Contemporary Approaches to Teacher Preparation

Examples from our own experiences provide a useful lens for exploring problems associated with conceptual change approaches at the teacher education level. Our examples are not intended to suggest, however, that the problems we have experienced are unique or that they are generalizable. Nor do they represent the depth or breadth of the complexities associated with this type of teaching and learning. Our intent in sharing our experiences is simply to highlight difficulties we have had as a backdrop for describing what we tried to do differently during the 1992-1993 academic school year. We use our own voices because our experiences occurred separately.

A Teacher Educator's Experiences with Conceptually-based Approaches

Challenging preservice and inservce teachers' conceptions and beliefs about literacy teaching has always been a major goal of the literacy methods courses I (Beth Ann) have taught at both the graduate and undergraduate levels, but I haven't always been as open about it as I am now. My openness began during the 1990-1991 academic school year. That year, my teacher/research partner (Jeri Sarracino) and I made major changes in a year-long literacy methods course we were teaching because it had become quite evident to us that we were having very little impact on the conceptions and beliefs of our students. Four changes were made. First, we placed less emphasis on specific topics and more emphasis on reflective inquiry about practice. Second, we replaced our artificial university-based teaching context with an authentic school-based one (an after-school tutoring program) within which we encouraged the preservice teachers to explore and develop their own conceptions and beliefs about literacy teaching and learning. Third, we encouraged collegiality and collaboration rather than isolation. Fourth, we placed less emphasis on information transmission and more on uninhibited conversations as a means of constructing new knowledge about literacy teaching and learning. The changes we made improved the quality of our course, but unfortunately, they did not lead to substantive and lasting conceptual change on the part of many of our students (Herrmann & Sarracino, 1993).

Some time after the course ended we began to understand what the problem had been -- what we said and what we did during the course were often two different things. For example, we emphasized reflective inquiry about practice, but it was not evident to our students that we were being reflective about our own practice -- we were, but with each other, not with our

students. We also encouraged our students to explore and develop their own conceptions and beliefs about literacy teaching and learning, but we still espoused and emphasized our way of thinking. Further, we encouraged collegiality and collaboration as useful means through which personal knowledge can be constructed, but we served as poor models of collaboration because we were too busy administering the program. Finally, we encouraged uninhibited conversations as a means of constructing new insights and understandings, but we spent considerably more time talking than our students did, and most of our conversations focused on their teaching; we rarely conversed with our students about new insights and understandings we had developed from our own teaching. These inconsistencies -- so blatantly unobvious to us -- were quite evident to our students. The mixed messages they sent led many of our students to draw erroneous conclusions about our intent and our content, which created confusion and as a result, a lack of conceptual change on the part of many of our students.

Preservice and Inservice Teachers' Experiences with Conceptually-based Approaches

Over the past two years we have seen a number of changes in our teacher education program at both the graduate (Leah and Wendy) and undergraduate levels (Kristy and Julie). Our program is moving toward a "theme of constructivist learning theory" with the intent that we will experience "conceptual coherence" and develop a view of ourselves as innovators (Flake, 1993, p. 8). Enacting constructvists principles has led to course restructuring with increased emphasis on integrating theory and methods. Some of our professors are assuming new roles as facilitators and coaches and, as a result, we are spending considerably less time listening to lectures and taking notes and more time participating in small group activities designed to facilitate social

interactions and reflective thinking. Autonomy is a major theme in most of our restructured courses -- we are expected to become less "obedient" and to break with our "conventional visions of teaching and learning" as such, we are encouraged to control of our own learning, be risk-takers, and study and learn from our own practice (Flake, 1993, p. 8).

These changes have certainly made our courses more enjoyable and worthwhile, but they have not led to substantive and lasting change in our conceptions and beliefs about teaching and learning. Part of the problem has to do with our prior learning experiences -- we have over twelve years experience as behavioristic learners which has conditioned us to believe that our role is to absorb the wisdom and knowledge of the "experts," not to create and construct our own way of thinking. Nothing in our prior learning experiences has prepared us for this "new" type of learning situation. Another part of the problem has to do with recurring inconsistencies both in our program and our courses that have created a great deal of confusion about new expectations. For example, we are expected to become thoughtful, reflective, autonomous teachers for the 21st century, but we are still evaluated by how well we can master specific content and perform specific teaching behaviors. At the preservice level, for instance, our student teaching grade is still determined by our performance on a state mandated teacher evaluation instrument emphasizing discrete teacher behaviors. A second inconsistency has to do with instructional changes our professors have made. Some of our professors have stopped lecturing with the intent that we will construct our own personal knowledge about teaching and learning, but a great deal of emphasis is placed on constructivism, with the expectation that we will adopt a constructivist view of learning. A third inconsistency has to do with control. It is true that we are being given

considerably more freedom than we have ever been given before to make choices about field-based projects and activities, but our professors still control what we learn and how we learn it. For instance, we are seldom asked to provide input into course goals and objectives, curriculum and tasks, or evaluation procedures. Rather, we are handed a syllabus at the beginning of our courses -- as has always been the case -- where it is all spelled out. Finally, program and course restructuring has led to more opportunities for hands-on experiences, especially at the preservice teacher level, but the general nature of our field-based experiences hasn't changed much. For the most part we are still expected to assume apprenticeship roles, observing and mastering "exemplary" practices. It is not uncommon for us, for instance, to be given specific practice teaching assignments predetermined by our professors or cooperating teachers. Less often are we provided opportunities to explore and experiment with our own thinking about teaching and learning.

Understanding the Problem

The shift in our program toward constructivism and conceptual change approaches has brought about a number of beneficial changes, however, the inconsistencies we have experienced and observed suggest that what is underlying these surface-level changes -- attitudes, beliefs, conceptions, values, habits and assumptions -- hasn't changed much. Teacher preparation is still viewed as a competency and performance-based enterprise with teacher educators still operating as the experts. In short, behaviorism still has a strong hold on the underpinnings of our program despite efforts to move toward constructivism and conceptual change approaches. In the following section we explore two reasons why this may be the case. The first has to do with the

types of changes currently taking place in teacher education programs. The second has to do with conceptual change at the teacher education level. Our exploration is based on what is already known about educational and conceptual change at the K-12 level.

Educational change and teacher education. In a recent publication focusing on K-12 teacher development, Hargreaves (1992) makes a case for cultures of teaching as a focus for educational change which suggests that current attempts at K-12 educational reform -- most of which focus on structural rather than cultural changes -- are limited because they do not seriously impact teachers' relationships with their colleagues. As Hargreaves explains,

> It is through working with their colleagues in particular ways, or working apart from them altogether, that teachers either persist in doing what they do or seek and develop ways to change their practice (pp. 231-232).

Hargreaves argues that altering practice depends on changing attitudes, beliefs, values, habits and assumptions associated with teacher cultures, which, in turn, depends on changing the ways in which teachers relate to one another.

Hargreaves' argument provides a useful framework for thinking about educational change at the teacher education level which seems to be following the model set forth by K-12 institutions. Not surprisingly, teacher cultures at the school and teacher education levels closely resemble one another -- both seem to be dominated by what Hargreaves (1992) calls cultures of individualism and balkanization. In the culture of individualism, teachers work in segregated classrooms seeing little of what their colleagues do (Lortie, 1975). Change is difficult in this type of culture and, as a result, most teachers tend to stick with what they know and they are

reluctant to forge ahead even when given the opportunity. In balkanized teacher cultures, teachers associate in separate and sometimes competing groups formed by differing views if learning, teaching styles, discipline and curriculum. Support for change in this type of culture is usually limited to the members of the specific group in which a teacher belongs.

Some schools and a few teacher education programs are beginning to move toward establishing collaborative teacher cultures, but there are problems with shifts in this direction. Collaboration at the K-12 level is often driven by bureaucratic procedures designed to increase attention given to joint teacher planning and consultation which results in what Hargreaves calls "contrived collegiality." This may also be the case at the teacher education level as some recent efforts to shift to a more collaborative teacher culture seem also to be driven by administrative contrivances designed to get new programs going rather than genuine interests and desires on the part of faculty members to provide collegial support for change.

Hargreaves (1992) calls for collaborative teacher cultures at the K-12 level which provide collegially supportive environments for change. Collaborative cultures such as these foster and build upon qualities of openness, trust and support between teachers and their colleagues. As Hargreaves explains,

> these kinds of environments capitalize on the collective expertise and endeavors of the teaching community. They acknowledge the wider dimensions of teachers' lives outside the classroom and the school, blurring the boundaries between in-school and out-of school, public and private, professional and personal -- grounding projects for development and change in a realistic and respectful

appreciation of teachers' broader worlds (p. 233).

At both the school and the teacher education level, collaborative cultures such as these offer hope for bringing about substantive and lasting change in the ways in which teachers relate to one another, and ultimately the attitudes, beliefs, values, habits and assumptions associated with the cultures in which they work. Collaborative cultures are a rarity at the teacher education level, however. Most of the changes currently taking place in teacher preparation seem to have more to do with structural rather than cultural changes (e.g., longer courses, different formats). As a result, the way in which teacher educators relate to one another hasn't changed much -- most still teach in isolation, or associate in cliques, or contrived collegial relationships brought about by administrative mandates. If Hargreaves argument is correct -- that changing practice depends on changing attitudes, beliefs, values, habits and assumptions, which in turn depends on changing ways in which teachers relate to one another -- then it may be reasonable to assume that a lack of cultural change at the teacher education level is one reason why the underpinnings of some programs are still rooted in behaviorism.

Conceptual change at the teacher education level. Much has been written over the past several decades about the role of prior knowledge in the learning process. Today, learners are generally not regarded as "empty slates" ready to be filled. Rather, they come to the learning environment with prior conceptions and beliefs about the topic under study which serve as filters through which new information is processed and understood. Prior conceptions can be easily influenced (Posner, Strike, Hewson & Gertzog, 1982) or they can be highly resistant to change (Champagne, Gunstone, & Klopfer, 1985; Nussbaum & Novick, 1982; Osborne & Freyberg,

1985). Usually, if little is known about the topic under study new information is easily combined with existing conceptions. However, well-developed concepts about a topic frequently conflict with new information which requires a more radical transformation of prior conceptions (Posner, Strike, Hewson & Gertzog, 1982).

Teachers as learners has been the subject of much research over the past decade. Of particular interest to researchers has been the prior conceptions and beliefs preservice and inservice teachers bring to the learning environment (Buchman, 1988; 1989; Bullough, 1989; Hollingsworth, 1986; 1989; Lortie, 1975; Remillard, 1993; Stoddart, 1991; Zeichner, Tabachnick & Densmore, 1988). Research has shown that years of experience with behavioristic approaches has played a major role in shaping teachers' conceptions and beliefs about teaching and learning which have a powerful impact on their practice.

Considerably less emphasis, however, has been placed on teacher educators as teachers or learners. In fact, teachers of teachers have traditionally been overlooked in studies of teacher education (Lanier & Little, 1986). More recently, teacher educators have begun studying themselves as teachers and learners (see for example, Guilfoyle 1993; Hamilton, 1993; Pinnegar, 1993; Placer, 1993; Russell, 1993). These studies are beginning to provide much needed insight into teacher educators' conceptions and beliefs which presumably have also been shaped by years of experience with behavioristic approaches. Most teacher educators have well-developed concepts about teaching and learning as a result of their experiences. If this is true, and if Posner's argument is correct -- that well-developed concepts about a topic frequently conflict with new information -- then, it may be reasonable to assume that teacher educators' conceptions

and beliefs are still in transition from a behaviorist to a constructivist orientation.

Building on Contemporary Approaches to Teacher Preparation

During the 1992-1993 academic school year we created and studied a different type of professional context for learning that directly and openly addressed the inconsistencies we had experienced (Herrmann, et al., 1993). We begin with background information about our project. After that we describe what we tried to do, adjustments and difficulties we encountered, and how we grew from our experiences.

Background

The purpose of the project was to (a) challenge our existing conceptions and beliefs about literacy teaching and learning and our own practices, and (b) create and study the effect of a different type of professional learning community on our personal and professional growth and development. The project was conducted within the context of a year-long literacy methods course created by combining two traditional semester-long preservice literacy methods courses into one year-long experience. Fifteen preservice teachers in their senior year (Kristy and Julie among them) and six inservice teachers with at least four years teaching experience (Wendy and Leah among them) who were interested in a different type of professional experience volunteered or were recruited for the project.

Our motives for participation varied. We were all interested in challenging our conceptions and beliefs about literacy teaching and learning and our practice as well as how we thought about ourselves as teaching professionals. In addition, we were interested in exploring issues of cultural and conceptual change at the teacher education level. A general assumption

underlying our work was that a thoughtful critical citizenry for the 21st century depends on the extent to which teachers and teacher educators become more reflective and analytical about their professional knowledge and teaching practices (Duffy, 1990) and their own professional growth and development.

What We Tried to Do

Figure 1 shows an organizing framework for thinking about cultural and conceptual change at the teacher education level. The framework is based on a model of K-12 classroom-based teacher and student development (Thiessen, 1990). Thiessen's model is useful for describing what we tried to do because it emphasizes two aspects of development particularly important to us in our efforts to build a different type of professional context for learning. First, it emphasizes a different type of relationship between teachers and students -- one based on equality and collegiality. We tried to create a learning environment in which we were equals, not in terms of knowledge and expertise, but in terms of how we approached learning. Second, Thiessen's model situates professional growth and development within the daily realities of classroom life. A major goal of the project was to challenge our conceptions and beliefs and practice through teaching and learning in authentic classrooms (i.e., the inservice teachers' classrooms).

Insert Figure 1 about here

The framework shows (a) five conditions of classroom-based teacher development: focus,

(quality learning for all participants), power (shared authority structure), environment (classroom and professional seminar), reference points for evaluation (meaningfulness, educational defensibility, socially justifiable), and action (reflective, interactive transformative), (b) three teacher-student development approaches: sharing teaching and learning (negotiating curriculum, forming teaching teams, problem-posing), examining classroom phenomena (creating investigative teams, inquiring into student learning, evaluating teaching), improving what happens (transforming teacher-student interaction, altering curriculum, culture-making), and (c) individual cells depicting our experiences relative to both the conditions and approaches. In the following sections we describe our experiences beginning with the focus of our project and working across the matrix. It should be noted that although these experiences appear in separate cells, and are described and discussed separately, they did not occur as discrete or linear activities. Rather, they were integrated and overlapping events that combined to impact our personal and professional lives. It should be noted too that these experiences evolved as the project progressed and we became clearer about who we were and what we were trying to accomplish at both the school and teacher education levels. Often, this was not a smooth evolution as we struggled to break free from our own traditions.

Focus: Quality learning for all participants. Classroom-based teacher development centers on improving the quality of learning for students and teachers (Thiessen, 1992). In this project, every participant was considered a learner -- including the teacher educator (Beth Ann). We developed collegial relationships whereby we could all learn and grow through mutual sharing of knowledge and expertise regardless of "rank" and experience. We operated as co-developers

of our professional learning context, co-learners about literacy teaching and learning and ourselves as teaching professionals, and co-researchers of our personal and professional growth and progress as well as our learning environment.

Power: Shared authority structure. Thiessen argues that traditional power relationships between teachers and students should be redefined so that students can participate in decisions that directly affect what happens in the classroom. We worked to blur traditional lines of separation between preservice and inservice teachers and teacher educators because we thought this would provide a better context for challenging our conceptions, beliefs and practice than what we had previously experienced. We created a shared authority structure through which we made joint decisions on an on-going basis about our purpose, organization, content, approaches, and evaluation. For example, how we spent our seminar time was jointly decided each week on the basis of the issues, problems and dilemmas we were facing in our classrooms. We also collaboratively decided how to go about examining our professional growth and development on both an individual and community basis as well as our learning context and we made joint decisions about ways to improve what was happening in our professional learning context.

Environment: Context for change. Classroom-based teacher development occurs in the complex and changing situation of classroom life (Thiessen, 1992). We developed two contexts for learning: (a) the inservice teachers' classrooms where we taught literacy bi-weekly, and (b) a weekly professional seminar where we met to share and discuss issues, problems and dilemmas associated with our classroom practice, growth and development and our professional context for learning (August - May). Within our school-based context we functioned in mutual teaching and

learning partnerships, with each consisting of an inservice teacher, two preservice teachers and, on a rotating basis, Beth Ann. Within the context of our professional seminar we operated as a community of professional learners. We also formed research partnerships through which we examined our own professional growth and development and our professional learning environment. On an on-going basis we made changes in both contexts to improve what was happening. For example, we altered the organization and content of our professional seminar sessions on a weekly basis to meet emerging needs and interests. At the classroom level we frequently altered our teaching schedules, focus, purpose, and organization to better meet the needs of our students as well as our needs as developing professionals.

Reference points for evaluation. Classroom-based teacher development combines personally meaningful, educationally defensible (rigorous), and socially justifiable (relevant) practices (Thiessen, 1992). On a personal level we focused on developing self-efficacy, building new interests and aspirations both in and out of school, and pursuing short and long-range goals for learning and knowledge. On an on-going basis we worked on an individual, team, and group basis to examine the extent to which we were becoming more efficacious, our interests and aspirations were changing, and we were making progress toward our goals. We also altered our goals as new insights and understandings developed as well as the amount of time and emphasis we placed on personal issues and problems.

On a professional level we focused on relevant issues, problems and dilemmas associated with literacy teaching and learning both within the context of our own classrooms and in a broader sense in terms of the 21st century. Specifically, we worked toward becoming thoughtful

and creative professionals for tomorrow's schools (Holmes Group, 1990) by (a) challenging our conceptions and beliefs about literacy teaching and learning and our own practice, (b) developing and maintaining control of our own literacy instruction, (c) understanding literacy teaching as a complex, intellectual, evolving process, and (d) developing ability to engage in reflective inquiry on an on-going basis as a means of constructing new knowledge and understandings. On an on-going basis we evaluated our progress toward these specific goals on both an individual and community basis as well as our movement toward becoming effective literacy teachers for tomorrow's schools. We also worked on an on-going basis to increase the relevancy of our goals and aspiration and to resolve problems and remove barriers to becoming thoughtful, reflective professionals.

Action: Reflective, interactive, transformative. Theissen calls for classroom-based teacher development that engages in reflective, interactive and transformative experiences focusing on the self-improvement and evaluation of the personal, educational and social implications of changing practices. We engaged in these types of experiences in both our classrooms and in our professional seminar. For example, at the beginning of the project we jointly constructed a vision for literacy teaching through individual, team, and group reflection about literacy teaching for the 21st century. The vision served as a theoretical framework for improving our practice, analyzing the professional literature, and reflecting about issues, dilemmas and problems impacting the literacy field. On a weekly basis we revised the vision in line with our evolving knowledge and understandings. Appendix A shows our vision at the end of the year-long learning experience. We also engaged in (a) mutual sharing of our own knowledge and expertise, and (b) reflective

discourse about our prior learning experiences, our classroom teaching experiences, and emerging insights and understandings, (c) critical analysis of the professional literature, (d) experimentation with new approaches to teaching and assessing literacy, and (e) professional writing and conference presentations. On an on-going basis we studied our own professional growth and development on an individual, team and group basis. Data sources included (a) reflective essays about our conceptions and beliefs and practice, (b) on-going vision statements, (b) goal statements, (c) weekly journal entries, (d) video and audio tape recordings of lessons, (e) unit and lesson plans, (f) classroom artifacts collected on a weekly basis [e.g., student work], and (g) written feedback form our teaching partners. We each organized and analyzed our own data using a modified version of a constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Appendix B provides a detailed description of analysis procedures. Finally, we examined our professional context for learning through on-going reflective discourse. At the end of the project we used a mapping technique to identify specific aspects of our learning environment that promoted and supported professional learning. Appendix C provides a detailed description of the mapping procedure.

Adjustments and Difficulties

We experienced the typical problems associated with change, such as, time constraints and resistance. Table 1 shows three additional types of adjustments and difficulties we encountered as the project progressed: roles and relationships, environment, and evaluation.

Insert Table 1 about here

Roles and relationships. Establishing and maintaining new roles and relationships based on collegiality and mutuality, as opposed to traditional roles and relationships based on cooperation and subordination was difficult. We were accustomed to developing guarded relationships as experts and novices, not collegial relationships based on honesty and trust. The notions of bonding and recognition and respect for everyone's knowledge and expertise were nearly foreign concepts to us, having been in numerous expert-novice situations in which the knowledge and expertise of only a few individuals were recognized and collaboration was the result of administrative decisions.

We also struggled with active knowledge construction as opposed to traditional learning through passivity and adoption. We were accustomed to one-way knowledge transmission and rote memorization and imitation, not mutual sharing of knowledge and expertise and critical and creative thinking. Challenging our current conceptions and beliefs was a difficult adjustment.

Finally, creating and maintaining a shared rather than a traditional top-down authority structure was problemmatic. We were accustomed to complying with a more rigid expert-novice structure in which the university professor decides on the purpose, organization, content, approaches, and evaluation. Thoughtful reflection and joint decision-making about our learning environment, represented a new way of thinking about a learning environment. We experienced difficulty with maintaining the necessary flexibility for it to be successful.

Classroom environment. Establishing mutual teaching and learning partnerships in which joint planning, team teaching and reciprocal feedback played an active role also was a new experience. We were accustomed to traditional supervisory teaching situations in which assignments are made and completed, teaching occurs in isolation, and the experts (cooperating teachers and/or teacher educators) provide supervision. Establishing mutuality required us to learn a totally new way of thinking about ourselves and our colleagues.

It was also difficult to adjust to an experimental teaching model whereby we were free to alter our context, create our own curriculum and redefine teacher-student relationships. We were accustomed to a more traditional teaching model in which control over context, curriculum or relationships remained with the classroom teacher.

Professional seminar. Within the context of our professional seminar we struggled with a constantly changing curriculum which evolved to meet individual needs. We were accustomed to a predetermined content shaped by specific objectives. We were also accustomed to covering a number of topics rather than an indepth analysis of a few. We struggled to stay focused on what we thought was important relative to our classroom teaching, needs and interests rather than specific objectives that ought to be covered.

We also had difficulty with the chaos that was created every time we modified our professional seminar environment to meet individual needs and interests. We were accustomed to a rigid environment with established routines whereby the teacher educator assumes responsibility for the learning environment.

Finally, we struggled with risk-taking as opposed to playing-it-safe. We were accustomed

to concealing our shortcomings as teachers and learners, not openly revealing them and besting others rather than providing support and challenge for one another. By tradition, we had grown to resist rather than welcome change and we weren't always willing to try new things.

Evaluation. Studying our own professional growth and development was a totally new endeavor. We were accustomed to external evaluation in which cooperating teachers and/or teacher educators decide progress of preservice teachers primarily through performance-based observations and mastery of specific content. Rather than focusing on performance objectives, we focused more globally on changes in our conceptions and beliefs, new insights and understandings, and changes in our own practice. We relied on reflective discourse, reflective inquiry, and professional writing to analyze our growth and progress rather than traditional measures, which was difficult because there was no clear model to follow.

We also struggled with studying our own learning environment. We were accustomed to accepting our learning environment as-is, not assuming responsibility for studying and changing it to fit our needs. There were few models to follow for this type of evaluation.

How We Grew

A detailed description of how we grew individually is provided elsewhere (Herrmann et al., 1993). We focus here on general themes of personal and professional growth and progress common to us all.

Personally we became more self-efficacious about our abilities to take charge of our own learning. Specifically, we became more confident in ourselves as knowledgeable, thinking professionals which led to clearer images of ourselves as literacy teachers. Further, we learned

to recognize and value not only the wisdom of the experts, but also our own knowledge and expertise as useful resources for learning. We also developed new interests as we became more confident in our own abilities (e.g., professional writing).

Professionally we became more knowledgeable about our own attitudes, conceptions, beliefs, values, habits and assumptions underlying our practice. For instance, as preservice and inservice teachers we realized that over the years we had become followers, dependent on the "master developers" (Duffy, 1990) -- curriculum developers, policy makers, researchers, and teacher educators -- to tell us what to do and how to think. As a teacher educator, Beth Ann developed a better understanding of her propensity to control the way teachers think about literacy teaching and learning. We grew toward becoming more mindful (Duffy, 1992) both as teachers and learners, although we struggled with breaking from our own traditions of passivity. For example, we learned how to explore the professional literature as critical thinkers, rather than as compliant followers and how to modify and adapt recommendations from the experts, rather than adopt them verbatim. In short, we learned how to think of ourselves as experts in our own classrooms, relying on our own intuition and knowledge about the complexity of classroom life.

We also modified and reconstructed our prior conceptions and beliefs about literacy and literacy teaching and learning. Before the project we tended to view literacy as a technical work rather than a complex, intellectual, evolving process. Through critical analysis of the professional literature we developed new knowledge about theories and practices currently impacting the literacy field (e.g., whole language). We came to understand that competing theories about literacy teaching and learning can work in complementary ways and acquired new knowledge

about how to do it.

Issues and Questions Surrounding Cultural and Conceptual Change at the Teacher Education Level

In this article we have raised a fundamental question about the current teacher education reform effort: What, if anything, is really changing in teacher education? Using our own experiences as a basis of inquiry, we have argued that surface-level changes currently taking place may not lead to substantive and lasting change in teacher education because they do not affect ways in which teacher educators relate to one another. We have argued for cultural and conceptual change in teacher education as a means of changing relationships and ultimately attitudes, beliefs, values, habits, and assumptions underlying teacher preparation. We have presented a framework for thinking about cultural and conceptual change in teacher education and described a different type of professional context for learning in which traditional relationships between an among preservice and inservice teachers and teacher educators were altered toward mutuality and collegiality. Our intent in raising this argument is to spark discourse among university and school administrators and preservice and inservice teachers about our basic premise and about issues and questions surrounding cultural and conceptual change at the teacher education level. In the following sections we pose a few questions to serve as a springboard for discussion.

Cultural Versus Structural Change

The following questions may be useful for thinking about cultural change at the teacher education level.

about how to do it.

Issues and Questions Surrounding Cultural and Conceptual Change at the Teacher Education Level

In this article we have raised a fundamental question about the current teacher education reform effort: What, if anything, is really changing in teacher education? Using our own experiences as a basis of inquiry, we have argued that surface-level changes currently taking place may not lead to substantive and lasting change in teacher education because they do not affect ways in which teacher educators relate to one another. We have argued for cultural and conceptual change in teacher education as a means of changing relationships and ultimately attitudes, beliefs, values, habits, and assumptions underlying teacher preparation. We have presented a framework for thinking about cultural and conceptual change in teacher education and described a different type of professional context for learning in which traditional relationships between an among preservice and inservice teachers and teacher educators were altered toward mutuality and collegiality. Our intent in raising this argument is to spark discourse among university and school administrators and preservice and inservice teachers about our basic premise and about issues and questions surrounding cultural and conceptual change at the teacher education level. In the following sections we pose a few questions to serve as a springboard for discussion.

Cultural Versus Structural Change

The following questions may be useful for thinking about cultural change at the teacher education level.

What kinds of changes are occurring in teacher education programs?

What is the relationship between cultural and structural changes?

What are the attitudes, conceptions, beliefs, values, assumptions, habits underlying teacher preparation?

To what extent do the underpinnings of teacher preparation align with what is happening on the surface level?

Is it important that these underpinnings change (i.e., can culture change?)?

If it is important for the underpinnings of teacher preparation to change, how do we go about changing attitudes, conceptions, beliefs, values, assumptions, habits at the teacher education level?

Whose responsibility is it to change the underpinnings of teacher preparation? What is the teacher educator's role?

What is the role of preservice and inservice teachers?

Conceptual Change at the Teacher Education Level

Some questions to consider when thinking about conceptual change at the teacher education level include:

What are teacher educators' conceptions and beliefs about teaching and learning? How similar or different are they from preservice or inservice teachers' conceptions and beliefs?

How are teacher educators' conceptions and beliefs formed?

How similar or different is their formation from the formation of preservice and inservice

teachers' conceptions and beliefs?

How do teacher educators' conceptions and beliefs influence their practice?

Do teacher educators' conceptions and beliefs influence their practice in similar ways that preservice and inservice teachers' conceptions and beliefs influence their practice?

How important is it for teacher educators to challenge their conceptions and beliefs?

What are teacher educators currently doing on their own to challenge their conceptions and beliefs? What else can they do?

What support is being provided for conceptual change at the teacher education level? What support is needed?

Final Reflections

We hope that by sharing some of our experiences and ways in which we tried to come face-to-face with inconsistencies in our own teacher education program we have succeeded in bringing attention to what we consider to be a serious problem with current efforts to reform teacher education. For too long attention has been focused on change at the K-12 level at the exclusion of teacher education reform. For too long teacher educators have tinkered with surface level changes in programs and practice with little regard to the underlying attitudes, conceptions, beliefs, values, assumptions and habits underling programs and practices. For too long teacher educators have been left to their own devices with little support from administrators, colleagues, or students for challenging and changing their own conceptions and beliefs and practice.

It is time for administrators, researchers, teachers, funding agencies, publishers of professional journals, and the general public to recognize and support teacher educators as

teachers and learners facing complex issues, problems and dilemmas within the context of their own classrooms, not the least of which is their own conceptual change. Likewise, it is time for teacher educators to recognize themselves as learners and to begin to openly and directly deal with their own inconsistencies in thinking and practice beginning with a thorough exploration of the roots of their own conceptions and beliefs.

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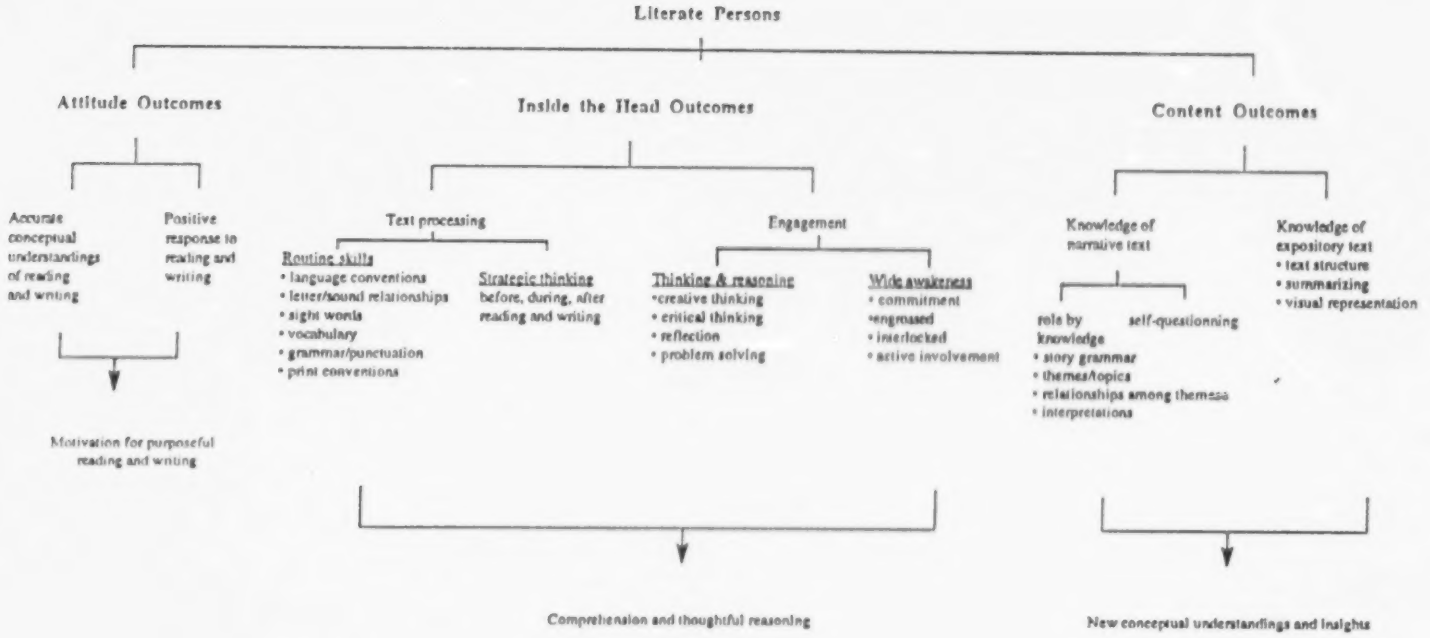
Appendix A

Vision for Literate Persons



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Appendix B

Procedures for Examining Professional Growth and Development

Data collected were organized into individual teaching files. Beginning with the first week of the project, on a weekly basis we independently read and reflected about data included in our files. Using agreed upon goals for learning as predetermined categories, we noted evidence of new insights and understandings and/or changes in our conceptions and beliefs, practices and self-perceptions as teaching professionals. On a monthly basis we shared and discussed our files with our teaching partners and with other members of our learning community who were not members of our teaching teams. We specifically asked our non-teaching partners to check the validity of our interpretations of our own data. This procedure was continued until the last piece of data was collected during the final week of the year-long project. On three occasions (September, December, May) we wrote reflective essays about our conceptions and beliefs and practice noting changes (if any) we had experienced during the preceding months. We shared our essays with our teaching partners and other members of our learning community. At the end of the project (May) we each constructed our own case stories of professional growth and development on the basis of our analyses (Herrmann et al., 1993). On two occasions we shared drafts of our case stories with non-teaching partners from our learning community to further validate our interpretations and refine our interpretations of our own data.

Appendix C

Procedures for Analyzing our Learning Environment

Post-project analysis of our learning environment occurred in three phases. During an initial phase we created individual maps depicting specific aspects of our environment that had promoted and supported professional learning by (a) listing one or two word phrases describing specific aspects of the learning environment that had influenced our thinking or practice [e.g., teaching partnerships], (b) grouping the items in ways that made sense to us and labeling each group, and (c) arranging the groups on a large sheet of paper using circles and lines to show interrelationships between and among grouped concepts, (d) creating a written explanation of the interrelationships depicted in our maps. Phase II of our analysis immediately followed the creation of our individual maps. During this phase we created team maps by sharing and discussing our individual maps with our teaching partners. Individual maps were collapsed, combined and refined through consensus. During Phase III of our analysis, we created a group map by sharing and discussing our team maps with the other members of our learning community. Team maps were collapsed, combined and refined through consensus.

Table 1

Adjustments and Difficulties

ROLES AND RELATIONSHIPS

Collegiality and Mutuality	versus	**Cooperation and Subordination**
Honesty and trust, open sharing		Guarded and reserved interactions
Bonding		Contrived Collegiality
Recognition and respect for everyone's knowledge and expertise		Emphasis on expert-novice
Active Knowledge Construction	**versus**	**Passivity and Adoption**
Mutual sharing of knowledge and expertise		One-way knowledge transmission
Challenge current conceptions and beliefs		Accept current conceptions and beliefs
Critical and creative thinking		Rote memorization and imitation
Shared Authority Structure	**versus**	**Top-down Authority Structure**
Thoughtful reflection about purpose, organization, content, evaluation		Passive acceptance of learning environment
Joint decision-making		Top-down decision-making
Flexibility		Rigidity

ENVIRONMENT -- CLASSROOM

Mutual Teaching and Learning Partnerships	**versus**	**Supervision**
Joint planning		Assignments
Team teaching		Isolation
Reciprocal feedback		Top-down supervision
Exploration and Experimentation	**versus**	**Traditional by-the-book**
Altering context		Maintaining context as-is
Creating curriculum		Covering curriculum
Building mutual relationships		Reinforcing top-down teacher-student relationships

ENVIRONMENT -- PROFESSIONAL SEMINAR

Evolving Curriculum	**versus**	**Predetermined Content**
On-going examination of individual needs		Ignoring individual needs
Indepth analysis of a few things		Content coverage
Focus on what is important		Focus on predetermined objectives and tasks

On-going Modifications	**versus**	**Routines**
Flexibility		Rigidity
Experimentation		Content coverage
Willingness to assume responsibility		Sticks with the status quo
Risk-taking	**versus**	**Playing-it-safe**
Revealing short-comings		Concealing shortcomings
Providing support and challenge for colleagues		Besting others
Willingness to try new things		Resists change

EVALUATION

Self-study of Professional Growth and Development	**versus**	**External Evaluation**
Tracking changes in conceptions and beliefs		Conceptions and beliefs ignored
Reflective inquiry about practice		Performance observations
Professional discourse and writing about new insights and understandings		Demonstrates mastery of specific content

Self-study of Learning Environment	**versus**	**Learning Environment Accepted As-is**
Understanding new roles and relationships		Compliance with traditional relationships
Exploring the effect of modifications		Modifications ignored
Understanding curriculum and tasks		Accepting curriculum and tasks as-is

Figure Caption

Figure 1. Framework for Thinking about Cultural and Conceptual Change at the Teacher Education Level

Conditions for Classroom-Based Teacher-Student Development

TEACHER-STUDENT DEVELOPMENT APPROACHES	FOCUS Quality Learning for All Participants	POWER Shared Authority Structure	ENVIRONMENT Context for Change (Classroom/Seminar)	REFERENCE POINTS FOR EVALUATION Meaningfulness (personal)	 Educational Defensibility (rigorous)	 Socially Justifiable (relevant)	ACTION Reflective, Interactive, Transformative
Sharing Teaching and Learning • Negotiating Curriculum • Forming Teaching Teams • Problem-	Co-Developers Co-Learners	Joint decisions about purpose, organization, content, approaches, evaluation	Mutual teaching and learning partnerships Community of professional learners	Pursued self-efficacy, interests, aspirations, short/long range personal goals	Pursued professional goals (e.g., challenged conceptions and beliefs	Explored relevant issues, problems, dilemmas Pursued literacy teaching for the 21st Century	• Jointly constructed and pursued a vision for literacy teaching • Engaged in mutual sharing of knowledge and expertise • Engaged in reflective discourse • Critically analyzed professional literature • Experimented with various approaches to literacy teaching and learning • Professional writing and conference presentations
Examining Classroom Phenomena • Creating Investigative Teams • Inquiring into Student Learning • Evaluating Teaching	Co-Researchers	Joint decisions about evaluation • Self • Environment	Research partnerships • Ongoing examination of own professional growth and development • Ongoing examination of our learning environment	Ongoing examination of progress toward self-efficacy, changes in interests, progress toward personal goals	Ongoing examination of progress towards professional goals	Ongoing examination of movement toward becoming thoughtful and creative professionals	Self-study • professional growth and development • Learning environment
Improving what happens • Transforming T-S Interaction • Altering curriculum • Culture-making	Co-Developers	Joint decisions about alterations in purpose of organization, content, approaches, evaluation	Altered purpose, organization, content approaches, evaluation	Altered goals as new insights and understandings developed Altered time and emphasis on personal issues and problems as needed	Worked to resolve problems and remove barriers to learning and growth	Worked to increase relevancy	Adapted and modified tasks and activities on a need-be basis

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